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AUTHOR Gordon, Howard R. D.
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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted in 1989 to determine the impact of the Factors Affecting Minority Enrollment (FAME) program on the recruitment and retention of black students at Florida Community College at Jacksonville (FCCJ). The FAME program offers minority and low-income high school students a 10-week, precollege orientation focusing on FCCJ's degree and certificate programs; a 7-credit summer program including a course on "Student Success," "English Composition I", and "Dynamics of Behavior" or an equivalent social science course; and $1,000 incentive grants for two students. The program evaluation sought to determine FAME completion rates, subsequent rates of enrollment at FCCJ, withdrawal patterns among college programs, and degree completion rates. The subjects of the study were 1,048 black students from 12 randomly selected Jacksonville area public high schools who had participated in the FAME program between 1985 and 1989. Major findings included the following: (1) 353 of the participants attended five or more FAME sessions, and 270 eventually enrolled at FCCJ; (2) 75% of the FAME participants were female; (3) during 1986, 1987, and 1989, there was a decline in the percentage of participants who completed the FAME program; (4) the average length of time taken to enroll at FCCJ after participating in the FAME program was one year, although 24% of the students enrolled three to six months later and 8% enrolled at FCCJ after three or more years; (5) 52% of the FAME students attending FCCJ enrolled on a part-time basis; and (6) by 1989, 11% of the FAME/FCCJ students had received associate degrees. (JMC)

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IMPACT OF FAME PROGRAM ON RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF BLACK STUDENTS INTO FLORIDA COMMUNITY COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE

Howard R. D. Gordon

Florida Community College
Jacksonville

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Impact Of FAME Program On Recruitment And Retention Of Black Students Into Florida Community College At Jacksonville

Howard R. D. Gordon, Ed. D.

Many minority and other young persons of limited socio-economic backgrounds are unaware of the opportunities that exist for increasing their knowledge and developing marketable skills. The same individuals are often impeded by families that do not encourage or have not encouraged their young people to improve their situations because of their own lack of knowledge, concern or financial ability to assist them. Many high school students have not envisioned themselves as surpassing the status of their parents and/or grandparents. The development of positive attitudes, the existing skills or potentialities in these miniority and low-income young people would help them move toward attainable career goals that can be met by enrolling at Florida Community College. Factors Affecting Minority Enrollment (FAME) is a program designed to address these needs.

The need to increase Black and other minority student enrollment at Florida Community College at Jacksonville was made evident from the results of the President's Blue Ribbon Task Force Committee Report. Of the approximately 75,000 students enrolled at FCCJ during 1986, less than 3,000 were black. These figures reflected a minority population at FCCJ that was far less than that in the Duval County School system and less than the percentage of Black people in the City of Jacksonville. According to the 1980 census, Black people were 25.4% of the 570,981 persons living in Jacksonville; other minorities were 3% (Florida Community College at Jacksonville, 1988). One of the College's affirmative action goals was to achieve the same ethnic percentage in the student body as is reflected in the community. Consequently, one of the Task Force recommendations was to encourage Black people of all ages to consider college for themselves. FAME is a program that for the past five years has helped reach these families in an effort to increase minority student enrollment at FCCJ.

The FAME program is intended to reach those students attending high school each year who have not been offered academic and/or athletic scholarships to college, need financial aid for their college expenses, have not had adequate counseling and guidance in setting career goals for themselves, yet have the ability to become an asset in the labor market. The program will assist the seniors in understanding that enrollment at FCCJ is one way of making the transition from high school to adult life. It will also encourage sophomores and juniors to consider the possibility of college enrollment at a later date.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF FAME

FAME started as a recruitment program at Kent Campus in 1985, FAME has become a college-wide recruitment tool for FCCJ. It is a three-part program that provides a "Head Start" for minority and low income high school students to become successful in college.

PART ONE

TEN-WEEK PRE-COLLEGE PROGRAM

The students are provided information on the college's associate of arts and associate of science degree programs and vocational and certificate programs. They are introduced to successful role models from the community who share with them their experiences from the world of work. The students are provided free transportation to and from each weekly session and provided a nutritional snack. The first and the last sessions include parents, guardians, and other interested persons. All other sessions are held on Wednesdays from 4 p.m. to 6p.m. at Kent Campus.

PART TWO

SUMMER ACADEMIC PROGRAM - SEVEN COLLEGE-CREDIT HOURS

The twelfth grade students are encouraged to apply for college admission during the ten-week pre-college sessions in order to qualify to enroll in the college credit program during the Summer B Term. This is our "Head Start" component of FAME. The students who enroll in the Summer Academic Program get seven college credit hours tuition free. The courses include a Student Success course, English Composition I and Dynamics of Behavior or an equivalent Social Science course.

PART THREE

GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Since 1987, two FAME students have received a $1000.00 Black Incentive Grant each year to attend FCCJ during the next school year. FAME coordinators, FCCJ foundation, and their Scholarship Committee hope to make at least six such grants and scholarships available to FAME students in future years.

Faculty coordinators, who receive four hours release time or overload, and one part-time clerk conduct all of the program activities with assistance from the administration, faculty and staff of FCCJ where necessary. The FAME design involves all areas of the college in the recruitment of students and the dissemination of information about FCCJ targeting high school students from public schools in the Jacksonville area. The program is affiliated with the college's comprehensive Black Student Success Program, a division of Student Affairs.

FAME OBJECTIVES

To recruit 100 minority high school students of average and above average ability and introduce them to college life and the variety of programs offered for career development;

To conduct a ten-week program that will reveal to these students their potential for becoming successful students;

To introduce these students to support services and other areas vital for college success;

To provide these students with testing, guidance and counseling necessary for setting career goals;

To inform them of all financial aid available at FCCJ on an individual basis and assist them in makin the necessary application;

To provide them with successful role models from the community to share their experiences;

To provide seniors who successfully complete the program the opportunity to acquire 7 hours of academic credit, tuition free during Summer B Term at FCCJ and;

To work within the retention system of the college to determine the retention rate of FAME students.

PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The purpose of this study was to assess the impact of FAME program on recruitment and retention of Black students into Florida Community College at Jacksonville (FCCJ). Research questions answered by the study were:

1. What proportion of the students who initially registered in FAME program completed the program?

2. How long after participation in FAME program before participants enrolled at FCCJ?

3. What proportion of FAME participants attended FCCJ, on a part-time/full-time basis?

4. What was the withdrawal rate of FAME participants at FCCJ?

5. Which instructional division/subject(s) at FCCJ posted the highest/lowest passing rates among FAME participants?

6. What proportion of FAME participants completed an Associate Degree at FCCJ, as of Winter 1989?

METHODS AND DATA SOURCES

Multiple data sources were used. The race, grade level, name of high school, social security number and gender of students were obtained from FAME coordinators. A profile of academic performance and curricular offerings was obtained from the division of Registration and Records at Florida Community College at Jacksonville. Additional assistance came from FCCJ, faculty and administrators.

The target population for this study consisted of high school students from public high schools in the Jacksonville area of Florida. A cluster sampling technique was used. According to their geographic characteristics, 12 area high schools were selected randomly. All Black 12th grade students from the 12 randomly selected area high schools who had participated in FAME program since 1985-1989 constituted the sample of this study. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

FINDINGS

Table 1 shows the distribution of students which registered and completed FAME program between 1985-1989. Of the 1048 students which registered, 75% or 796 consisted of females. From 1987-1989 there was a steady increase in registration. Further data from Table 1, revealed that about one-third or 353 of the participants completed five or more FAME sessions, with 75% or 274 being females. This information would possibly suggest that Black females had a higher career or occupational aspirations than Black males. During 1986, 1987 and 1989 there was a decline in the percentage of participants which completed FAME program. This decline was probably due to lack of motivation by some of the participants. The length of time taken to enroll at FCCJ after participating in FAME program was an average of one year as indicated by over 50% of the participants (Table 2) between 1985-1988. One of the reasons why more Black seniors took as long as a year before enrolling at FCCJ might be due to lack of finance or other personal problems which are generally prevalent among low-income groups. According to the data in Table 2, 24% of the 1988 participants enrolled at FCCJ 3-6 months after completing FAME programs. Overall, between 1985-1987 an average of 8% of the participants enrolled at FCCJ, three or more years after participating in FAME program.

Table 3 presents a summary of the distribution of full-time and part-time enrollment of FAME participants at FCCJ. From 1985-1988 over 50% of the FAME participants attended FCCJ on a part-time basis. This pattern tends to support most of the literature concerning the part-time enrollment of the typical community college student. However, according to Table 3 this trend was reverse with an increase in full-time enrollment in 1989. Fifty-eight percent of the participants enrolled full-time. This suggests that recruitment had a positive impact particularly for those two years (1988-1989). Overall, between 1985 -1989 about 52% or 141 participants enrolled on a part-time basis (Table 3).

The data shown in Table 4 reveals that between 1985-1989 the withdrawal rate was highest for the year 1986 (65%). The table further indicates that between 1987-1989 there was a decline in the withdrawal rate with 1989 posting the lowest percentage (Table 4). The withdrawal rate for 1985-1988 was obtained from students records which indicated that these students actually discontinued attending FCCJ. However, with the decrease in the withdrawal rate, there was evidence that points to the FAME program as having a positive impact on the retention of Black students. The overall withdrawal rate for 1985-1989 was 28%.

In order to determine the highest and lowest passing rates among FAME participants, ranks were assigned. Ranks were assigned to selected General Education Core subjects. The five instructional divisions were represented as shown by Tables. Ranks were allocated based on the subject(s) with the highest failure rates (combination of Grade D and Grade F) for each subject within the five instrucitonal divisions. Only subjects which were taken by most of the participants received a rank. A rank of 1 represented a high passing rate and a rank of 10 represented a low passing rate. Data from Table 5 indicated that Speech Communication had the highest rank. Over 50% of the FAME participants received a "B" in this course. No students received less than a "C" in Speech Communication. This probably suggests that Black students express their thoughts best through oral communication. Impressive results were obtained from students who had taken Calculus and Pre-Calculus. This probably suggests that Black students are likely to perform successfully. Reading, Calculus and Pre-Calculus had the highest percentage (31%) of students receiving an "A" grade. In the Social Sciences: American History and Psychology were equally ranked. Reading Calculus & Pre-Calculus, and Humanities had a rank of 4.5 which suggests that Black students did perform better in Natural Sciences, Humanities and selected areas in Communication and Mathematics as opposed to Social Sciences and English Composition.

Since the inception of the FAME program 11% (Table 6) or 4 participants received Associate Degrees. Of these four students, two had enrolled at FCCJ 3-6 months after participating in FAME in 1985. The remaining two students enrolled at FCCJ one year after participating in FAME in 1985. This graduation rate is comparable to the average community college student who enrolls part-time and takes between 13-16 terms to complete programs. Fifty-three percent of the FAME participants attend FCCJ on a part-time basis.

CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions based specifically on the findings of this study:

1. The majority, or 75% of the participants in FAME program during 1985-1989 consisted of females. With this high percentge it is evident that FAME was successful in recruiting female participants.

2. There was a gradual increase in the enrollment of FAME participants at FCCJ during 1985-1989. This data indicated that FAME had some positive influence in recruiting FAME participants to FCCJ.

3. As of winter 1989 there was a significantly higher number of FAME participants attending FCCJ on a full-time basis. This was probably due to the increase of grants and scholarships for participants who completed the 10-week pre-college program.

4. FAME program had a positive impact on the retention of Black students at FCCJ. The overall withdrawal rate for 1985-1989 was 28%.

5. With initial background preparation in academic subjects, Black students are likely to perform successfully.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. More attention should focus on recruiting more Black males for FAME program.

2. Continued efforts should be made to increase the number of participants completing FAME program.

3. Community college and high school personnel should continue the development and promotion of programs to assist Black students in the transition from high school to post secondary education.

Additional research is needed in several areas relating to this study; for example, what is the relationship between student's placement scores and their academic performance? What proportion of FAME participants attended other instituitions of higher learning other than from FCCJ? What are the educational expectations of parents of FAME participants? This study provided baseline data for future studies on recruitment and retention of minority students.

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REFERENCE

Florida Community College at Jacksonville (1988). FAME Recruitment Proposal and Annual Report.

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS REGISTERING AND COMPLETING FAME PROGRAM

Number Registered For Fame Program				Number Completed Fame Program *					
Year	N	Male (n)	Female (n)	N	%	Male (n)	%	Female (n)	%
1985	98	35	63	42	43	10	24	32	76
1986	98	23	75	29	30	12	41	17	59
1987	130	38	92	30	23	13	43	17	57
1988	338	75	263	132	39	30	23	102	77
1989	384	81	303	120	31	14	12	106	88
Total	1048	252	796	353		79		274	

* Represents students who attended 5 or more Fame sessions

TABLE 2

LENGTH OF TIME TAKEN TO ENROLL AT FCCJ
AFTER PARTICIPATING IN FAME PROGRAM

* Year Participated in Fame Program	** Number Enrolled at FCCJ	%	Time Taken To Enroll at FCCJ
1985	5	14	3-6 months after participating in Fame Program.
	22	63	1 year after participating in Fame Program.
	6	17	2 years after participating in Fame Program.
	2	6	3 or more years after participating in Fame Program.
Total	35	100	
1986	9	20	3-6 months
	24	55	1 year
	7	16	2 years
	4	9	3 or more years
Total	44	100	
1987	7	21	3-6 months
	20	59	1 year
	3	9	2 years
	4	11	3 or more years
Total	34	100	
1988	14	24	3-6 months
	44	76	1 year
	--	--	2 years
	--	--	3 or more years
Total	58	100	

* Data for 1989 enrollment for FCCJ was not available during the time when this study was conducted (Winter 1989).

** Represents participants who had completed Fame Program, and also participants who had attended 1-4 sessions.

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF FULL-TIME/PART-TIME
ENROLLMENT OF FAME PARTICIPANTS
AT FCCJ

Year	N	Full-Time (n)	Full-Time %	Part-Time (n)	Part-Time %
1985	5	1	20	4	80
1986	37	14	38	23	62
1987	55	20	36	35	64
1988	70	34	49	36	51
1989	103	60	58	43	42
Total	270	129		141	

TABLE 4

WITHDRAWAL RATE OF FAME PARTICIPANTS
AT FCCJ AS OF WINTER 1989 (892)*

Year Enrolled at FCCJ	Number Enrolled at FCCJ	Withdrawal (n)	Rate (%)
1985	5	3	60
1986	37	24	65
1987	55	28	51
1988	70	15	21
**1989	103	8	8
Total	270	78	

*892=Winter Term 1989

** Withdrawal Rate for 1989 was determined by enrollment data between Fall 1988 and Winter 1989 (891-892)

TABLE 5

Distribution of Rank of Subjects Based On Performance
By FAME Participants at FCCJ: Summer 1985 - Fall 1988

Subject *	Rank**	Grade										N
		A (n)	%	B (n)	%	C (n)	%	D (n)	%	F (n)	%	
Communication												
English Composition	10	8	6	35	25	68	48	15	10	16	11	142
Reading	4.5	21	31	23	34	20	30	2	3	1	2	67
Speech Communication	1	3	13	13	57	7	30					23
Mathematics												
Mathematics: General	9	8	11	10	14	28	38	16	21	12	16	74
Mathematics: Calculus & Pre-calculus	4.5	10	31	11	35	8	25	2	6	1	3	32
Natural Sciences												
Applied Biology	6	1	4	4	17	13	54	2	8	4	17	24
Chemistry	4.5	1	5	8	42	7	37	1	5	2	11	19
Social Sciences												
American History	7.5	4	12	6	18	15	46	3	9	5	15	33
General Psychology	7.5	1	3	6	20	15	50	3	10	5	17	30
Humanities												
Humanities	4.5	7	21	15	46	8	24	1	3	2	6	33

* General Education Core

** 1 = High 10 = Low

TABLE 6

COURSE COMPLETION OF 1985-1986
FAME PARTICIPANTS AT FCCJ

Year Participated in Fame Program	Enrolled at FCCJ N	Awarded Associate Degree (n)	%
1985	35	4	11
1986	44	--	--

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